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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attorney General's Office secures precursor chemical violation conviction

(Phoenix, Ariz. – April 9, 2004) The Arizona Attorney General's Office secured a conviction against Harry J. Chung, owner and operator of the Unocal Self-Serve Mart at 2810 East Bell Road in Phoenix. Chung was found guilty in Maricopa County Superior Court of knowingly selling pseudoephedrine and ephedrine to people knowing the products would be used to manufacture methamphetamine. Both drugs are found in over the counter cold and allergy medications, and are the main ingredients in the manufacturing of methamphetamine. Mr. Chung also was found guilty of using the proceeds of these sales to maintain control of his convenience store business.

This was the first precursor chemical violation prosecuted before an Arizona jury. This case was resulted from an investigation by the Arizona Department of Public Service.

"This is a significant victory because this is the first conviction under the new law regulating precursor drugs, Goddard said. "Methamphetamine drugs are a big problem in Arizona, and this conviction sends a message to the community that knowingly selling the precursor components is as culpable as manufacturing meth itself."

Evidence presented at trial included a package of pseudoephedrine altered by Mr. Chung to contain 144 tablets rather than the original package of 48 tablets. Other evidence presented included Mr. Chung's gross income for pseudoephedrine sales, which was \$820,000 over a two and a half year period. This income was two-thirds of Mr. Chung's revenues, and exceeded cigarette and soda sales. Mr. Chung sold enough pseudoephedrine and ephedrine over a two and a half year period to make over 500 pounds of methamphetamine.

Mr. Chung will be sentenced on May 5, 2004. He faces a possible \$820,000 fine and up to five years in prison. Assistant Attorney General Kristen Hoffmeyer represented the State of Arizona in this case.

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